United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1096
10 March 1992

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz tells correspondents that his delegation's visit to New York is "a goodwill mission".

+ Force Commander of United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia to begin consultations with Croatian authorities tomorrow.

+ Human Rights Commission concludes forty-eighth session in Geneva.

+ Commission on Status of Women opens thirty-sixth session in Vienna tomorrow; will focus on 1995 World Conference on Women, among other things.

* * *

Security Council President Diego Arria (Venezuela) met today with Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz and other Government officials for talks on Iraq's position on Council demands that that country provide full disclosure of its weapons programmes.

Following the meeting, Tariq Aziz told correspondents that he had conveyed to the Council President that the visit of the Iraqi delegation was "a goodwill mission" aimed at explaining to the Council which of its obligations contained in the Council's resolutions Iraq had already implemented. The purpose of the meeting was also to reach a "reasonable understanding with the Council on the further process". Iraq wanted a "professional implementation" of the resolutions -- not one driven by "biased political motives", the Iraqi Minister explained.

Following consultations this afternoon, the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the United Nations, Sir David Hannay, told the press that the Secretary-General's latest report on Iraqi compliance with resolution 687 (1991) had concluded that Iraq "was not in compliance" with that document. He further said that the opening statement by the Council President tomorrow at the formal meeting would be "extremely firm" and would convey an "important message" to Iraq.

(more)

For information media--not an official record

Last night, following consultations by the Council on the matter, the Council President said the objectives of the meetings with the Iraqi delegation was to "normalize relations with a member country" of the United Nations. He asserted that Iraq would be given ample time to present its case and said that Council members would convene in a formal meeting tomorrow, Wednesday 11 March, and would continue the meeting on Thursday, "if circumstances so required".

The Council condemned on 28 February, in a Presidential statement, the failure of Iraq to provide the special mission sent to Iraq a week earlier with an "unconditional agreement" to implement all the Council's resolutions and warned Iraq of "serious consequences" of continued breaches of its resolutions.

The Council President was also scheduled to meet today with the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament, Rolf Ekeus, and with Hans Blix, Director of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

At a press conference at noon before his meeting with the Council President, Mr. Ekeus told correspondents that it was his understanding that Iraq would get "a clear message" from the Council saying that all its weapons must be disclosed. He noted that compliance by Iraq would be a "very strong incentive for sanctions against Iraq to be eased".

* * *

The 34-member advance party that arrived in Belgrade yesterday, led by the Force Commander of United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR), Lieutenant-General Satish Nambiar, has begun its reconnaissance missions in the United Nations Protected Areas (UNPA).

The mixed military, police, and civilian reconnaissance teams left Belgrade this morning for the UNPA of Eastern Slavonia and Krajina. A similar mission will depart from Zagreb for Western Slavonia tomorrow.

Today, while the advance party was on reconnaissance mission, Force Commander Nambiar travelled from Belgrade to Zagreb where he was briefed by the United Nations Military Liaison Office. Tomorrow, he will begin a series of consultations with Croatian authorities, and on Friday in Sarajevo, he will inspect possible sites for the UNPROFOR headquarters.

* * *

The Commission on Human Rights has ended its six-week session in Geneva, again devoting the greater part of it to examining the question of human rights violations as they occur anywhere in the world. The forty-eighth session also witnessed the admission to the main United Nations human rights body of 10 additional members.

In his closing remarks, Jan Martenson, outgoing Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights, suggested that the United Nations adopt efforts to

(more)

strengthen and protect democratic institutions everywhere in the world. In those cases where the Organization had been instrumental in the establishment of democracy, it could not morally stand by and abandon a people to be robbed of its birthright by force of arms, he said.

During the session, deposed Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide had urged the Commission to take a stronger stand against Governments that come to power by force of arms. Among its decisions, the Commission strongly condemned the overthrow of the Haitian leader and requested that a special rapporteur be appointed to prepare a report on human rights in that country.

In other action, the Commission also deeply deplored the deterioration the situation in Equatorial Guinea and recommended the appointment of an expert for the human rights situation there. Concerning Guatemala, the Commission recognized the clear commitment of the Government to guarantee the full enjoyment of human rights, but expressed profound concern at the persistence of serious violations. Action was also taken regarding Albania, Afghanistan, Western Sahara, Cambodia and Sri Lanka.

The Commission has also taken action relating to the human rights situation in Myanmar, Iraq, Cuba, Iran, Israeli-occupied territories, East Timor and South Africa, Albania, Afghanistan, Western Sahara, Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Romania.

* * *

Preparations for the 1995 World Conference on Women, communications concerning the status of women, and violence against women, among other things, will be the focus of attention of the Commission on the Status of Women, scheduled to hold its thirty-sixth session in Vienna from 11 to 20 March.

The session will also examine improvement of the status of women in the United Nations Secretariat and the priority themes of equality, development and peace. Priority will also be accorded to positive action that can be taken to achieve equality for women and reduce the gap between discrimination in law and in practice. A report of the Secretary-General, to be reviewed by the Commission, asserts that despite considerable progress in eliminating legal discrimination, it still existed in practice, as shown by statistics on the ratio of women to men in education, the labour force and decision-making positions.

* *** *

United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1097
11 March 1992

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ In opening today's meeting of the Security Council, its President concludes, on behalf of Council members, that "Iraq has not fully complied with the obligations placed upon it by the Council"; all members of the Council, as well as Kuwait and heads of the Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament and International Atomic Energy Agency point out failure by Iraq to fully comply with its obligations; Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister suggests convening of a technical meeting, "as soon as possible", on the question of obligations; meeting to continue tomorrow.

+ Vladimir Petrovsky and James O.C. Jonah assume posts as under-secretaries-general for Political Affairs.

* * *

The Security Council convened this morning in a formal meeting to discuss Iraq's obligations under Council resolution 687 (1991) and all subsequent decisions and to hear a Presidential statement on the issue.

During the meeting, which carried over into the evening after a two-hour recess, the Council heard statements by all 15 Council members, as well as by Iraq, Kuwait, the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament, Rolf Ekeus, and Hans Blix, Director-General of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

In his opening statement, Council President Diego Arria (Venezuela) said the Council had concluded that "Iraq has not fully complied with the obligations placed upon it by the Council". On behalf of the Council, he expressed the hope that today's meeting would provide an opportunity to "advance in the consideration of this issue as required in the interest of world peace and security, as well as that of the Iraqi people".

In his statement, the President cited the declaration adopted by the Security Council Summit on 31 January, in which 15 Heads of State and Government had stated that the Council resolutions remained "essential to the restoration of peace and stability in the region and must be fully implemented".

(more)

With regard to Council resolution 688 (1991) demanding that Iraq end the repression of its civilian population, the President said the Council remained "deeply concerned" at the "grave human rights abuses" which the Iraqi Government continued to perpetrate against its population, in particular in the northern region of Iraq, and in southern Shi'a centres. He said the Council was particularly concerned at the reported restrictions on the supplies of essential commodities, in particular food and fuel.

The Presidential statement also described the specific obligations imposed upon Iraq by several Council resolutions. Those obligations concern, among other things: the return of Kuwaiti property from Iraq to Kuwait; the demarcation of the international boundary between Iraq and Kuwait; the humanitarian situation of the Iraqi civilian population, including in the Kurdish-populated areas; the full cooperation of the Iraqi authorities with the United Nations specialized agencies in the area of monitoring and verification of its weapons programmes; and repatriation of Kuwaitis and third-country nationals in Iraq.

In their respective statements, the 15 members of the Security Council, as well as Kuwait and the heads of the Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament and the International Atomic Energy Agency (AIEA) pointed out that Iraq had failed to fully comply with its obligations contained in the Security Council resolutions and stressed that these obligations had to be carried out entirely and unconditionally.

In his statement to the Council, Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz proposed a technical meeting, as soon as possible, between Iraqi representatives, representatives of the Special Commission, and attended by representatives of all member States of the Security Council. During this meeting, Mr. Aziz said, delegates would review all data, information and documentation, previously presented by Iraq, and prepare a comprehensive report to be presented to the Council. Such a meeting, he said, would bring "this issue out of the cycle of allegations, frictions, misunderstandings and ill-intended political positions, and place it in its rightful political framework".

The Security Council meeting is scheduled to continue tomorrow, when it will hear additional explanations from Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz.

* * *

Vladimir Petrovsky and James O.C. Jonah, who were appointed under-secretaries-general for Political Affairs by Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, have assumed their posts effective 1 March.

Mr. Petrovsky, who joined the Soviet diplomatic service in 1957, became Deputy Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union in 1986 and First Deputy Foreign Minister in 1991. He has also been the head of the Soviet delegation to the United Nations General Assembly.

(more)

Mr. Jonah had served as Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Questions, Regional Cooperation, Decolonization and Trusteeship since 1 January 1991 and, most recently, as the Secretary-General's special envoy to Somalia.

A national of Sierra Leone, Mr. Jonah joined the Secretariat in 1963 and has held a number of post in the Organization, among others Assistant Secretary-General, Office for Research and the Collection of Information (1987-1990); Assistant Secretary-General in the Office of Field Operational and External Support Activities (1982-1987); and Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services (1979-1981).

* *** *

United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1098
12 March 1992

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council says Iraq "must immediately take appropriate action to comply fully and unconditionally with Council resolutions", in Presidential statement at resumed meeting.

+ Secretary-General appoints Lieutenant-General John M. Sanderson of Australia as Commander of military component of United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia.

* * *

On the second day of meetings on the question of Iraqi compliance with resolution 687 (1991), the Security Council called, in a Presidential statement, on Iraq to take the "appropriate action" to comply "fully and unconditionally" with its obligations under that text. Members of the Council expressed the hope that the goodwill expressed by the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq would be matched with deeds.

The statement was read out by Council President Diego Arria (Venezuela) this afternoon, after hearing Mr. Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, this morning.

Prior to a suspension of the morning meeting to permit Council members to engage in consultations, the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister had said in a statement that his country was ready to enter into serious talks to work out the details of its compliance with resolutions adopted following the Gulf war, including resolution 687 (1991).

In particular, he expressed his country's willingness to enter into a dialogue with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Special Commission established to carry out the disarmament provisions of resolution 687, in order to assist them in their work. The Deputy Prime Minister was responding to questions raised following his statement to the Council yesterday morning.

Mr. Aziz also said that all proscribed weapons had been destroyed. However, he objected to the destruction of equipment that could be converted

(more)

to civilian or non-banned production. He added that the Iraqi authorities were ready to publish the names of missing persons in Iraqi newspapers and to provide the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) with access to detention camps.

As to charges that Iraq was carrying out a blockade against three of its provinces, he explained that food rations were supplied to certain "caterers" in the Kurdish-controlled areas, who were then responsible for their distribution. He denied the existence of any Shiite problem in Iraq. He also called on the Council to allow an Iraqi delegation to attend its regular review of Iraq's compliance with the Council's resolutions.

Commenting on that statement, Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations, Thomas Pickering, said: "We are once again in a cat and mouse game" in which Iraq was willing to discuss at great length but not to comply. Sir David Hannay (United Kingdom) characterized some of the replies as "frankly evasive", and said he hoped that new promises of cooperation would be matched with deeds. Yoshio Hatano (Japan) said he felt that his questions on the fate of Kuwaiti and third-country nationals in Iraq had not been adequately answered.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today announced the appointment of Lieutenant-General John M. Sanderson of Australia as Commander of the military component of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), established by the Security Council on 28 February.

General Sanderson has served in a variety of posts in the armed forces of his country, including Chief of Staff of the Army's Land Command and Commander of the 1st Brigade during which time he was also the Airborne Force Commander.

A construction and military engineer by training, General Sanderson has extensive experience in South-East Asia, including operational service in East Malaysia and South Viet Nam, where he was involved in mine clearance and reconstruction of war-damaged infrastructure in the southern provinces.

* *** *

United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1099
13 March 1992

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General to send his Special Envoy, Cyrus Vance, on fact-finding mission to Nagorno-Karabakh to gather information about "grave situation" in that region.

+ Secretary-General to send technical team to Mogadiscio to prepare the United Nations monitoring mechanism of cease-fire and to seek insurance for unimpeded humanitarian assistance to displaced persons in that city.

+ British actress Julie Andrews named Goodwill Ambassador for United Nations Development Fund for Women.

+ United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East protests harassment on its staff by Israeli security forces.

+ Question of equality between the sexes should not be separated from debates on new world order, development, democracy, peace and social justice, Women's Commission in Vienna is told by Director of Division for Advancement of Women.

+ Force Commander of United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia to inspect facilities in Bosnia-Herzegovina and to deploy advance contingents to protected areas.

* * *

A United Nations spokesman announced today that Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali would send his Special Envoy, Cyrus Vance, on a mission to Nagorno-Karabakh to gather information about the "grave situation" in that region. The mission is expected to leave in a few days.

In a telegram today to the President of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), Jiri Dienstbier, the Secretary-General said Mr. Vance would go to the cities of Yerevan and Baku, in Armenia and Azerbaijan. He said the situation called "for a concerted effort to prevent further violence and to create the conditions for a peaceful solution".

(more)

For information media--not an official record

The Secretary-General has sent cables to the President of Armenia and the acting President of Azerbaijan, calling on both sides to show maximum restraint and to seek an end to what he described as the "cycle of violence which has gripped the region".

* * *

Describing the situation in Somalia as "extraordinarily complex" -- one which has so far "eluded conventional solutions", Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali says he intends to dispatch a technical team, as soon as possible, to Mogadiscio to prepare an operational plan for a United Nations "monitoring mechanism" to oversee the fragile cease-fire agreed upon on 3 March.

The team will consist of about 20 civilian and military personnel, together with the representatives of the three regional organizations involved in efforts to solve the conflict in Somalia -- the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

In his report to the Security Council, dated 11 March, the Secretary-General says the team will pursue consultations with the two parties -- Interim President Mohamed and General Aideed -- on the arrangements for the UN monitoring. The team will also discuss how to ensure that the cease-fire is respected by armed elements which are not under control of either of the two protagonists. Mr. Boutros-Ghali emphasizes that the UN monitoring mechanism will need the full approval of the Security Council before it can be implemented.

It is the Secretary-General's intention that the technical team also investigates how to ensure the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian assistance to the displaced persons in and around Mogadiscio. He says that in the light of immediate threat posed by severe food shortages to the country's population, the relief programme should "not necessarily be dependent upon the cease-fire". But, he notes, such a relief programme "can not be undertaken without adequate measures to ensure the safety of relief officials".

The Security Council has held consultations on the subject this afternoon. (S.23693)

* * *

The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) has announced that British actress Julie Andrews has been named Goodwill Ambassador for the Fund by Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

Ms Andrews will travel to promote the work of UNIFEM which provides financial and technical support to low-income women in developing countries. The Fund also finances activities that enable women to participate in

(more)

mainstream development programmes and decision-making. The actress' first mission will be to travel to developing countries where she will meet women involved in UNIFEM programmes.

UNIFEM will hold a press conference to introduce Ms. Andrews at 11:00 AM on 19 March at United Nations Headquarters, after which she will meet with the Secretary-General.

* * *

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has protested to the Israeli authorities over an incident in Ramallah, West Bank, on 12 March, in which border police threw a sound bomb and tear-gas canister in the direction of two UNRWA staff members.

The incident occurred after an UNRWA international official and her assistant, on duty in Ramallah, came upon a clash between local residents and Israeli border police. Both were severely affected by a tear-gas canister fired over their heads from a distance of approximately two metres. The UNRWA official required treatment at Ramallah hospital and was later released.

UNRWA's Field Office in the West Bank immediately protested to the Civil Administration and today, UNRWA headquarters made a démarche to the Israeli Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Vienna requesting that the incident be investigated with a view to preventing harassment of UNRWA personnel in the future.

* * *

The question of the equality of the sexes could not be separated from the debates on the new world order, development, democracy, peace and social justice, said Chafika Meslem, Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women, as she opened the thirty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women in Vienna, yesterday.

A major purpose of the session, she continued, was to consider how the international community would deal with the preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in 1995.

The Commission elected by acclamation Mervat Tallawy (Egypt) as its Chairman. It also concluded debate on programming and coordination matters related to the United Nations and the United Nations system.

* * *

The Force Commander of the United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR), Lieutenant-General Satish Nambiar, left Zagreb for Sarajevo this morning. He was expected to inspect the facilities at the proposed main logistics base at Banja Luka in northern Bosnia-Herzegovina.

(more)

On Saturday, he will fly to Belgrade where some 500 advance infantry and support elements have been arriving since yesterday. He will formally welcome the advance contingents on Sunday, before deploying them Monday to the United Nations Protection Areas where they will conduct detailed reconnaissance in preparation for the 14,000-man full Force.

* *** *

United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1100
16 March 1992

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Assistant Secretary-General Giandomenico Picco named head of United Nations delegation participating in talks with Iraq on its sale of oil for essential humanitarian purposes.

+ Secretary-General's Special Representative, Yasushi Akashi, arrives in Phnom Penh, marking beginning of deployment of United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia.

+ Administrative and Budgetary Committee takes up report by Secretary-General on financing of United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia, estimated at some $620 million for 12 months.

+ Preparatory Committee for Earth Summit discusses need to address debt problem of developing countries in environment-development context.

+ Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator reports some 300 people killed and 180,000 homeless in earthquake in Turkey.

+ Special Commissions on the Law of the Sea concludes spring session in Kingston approving programmes for summer session.

* * *

Assistant Secretary-General Giandomenico Picco has been named head of the United Nations delegation participating in talks with Iraq concerning the sale of oil to meet essential humanitarian needs of that country's population. In an announcement this morning, the Secretary-General's Spokesman, François Giuliani, said Mr. Picco would replace Assistant Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who has been assigned other duties by the Secretary-General.

Representatives of the United Nations and Iraqi officials have been negotiating the conditions for Iraqi oil sale under Security Council resolution 706 (1991), which allows Iraq to sell oil worth of $1.6 billion to finance food and medicine to meet the humanitarian relief needs of Iraqi civilians.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

In January, Mr. Annan told correspondents that, since the adoption of the resolution, "not a single drop of oil had been sold" because of various points of conflict between the United Nations and Iraqi authorities. Following that, Iraq broke off a scheduled second round of talks on that issue, claiming the conditions imposed on Iraq by the United Nations were "unnecessary and obtrusive."

The President of the Security Council said in a statement in February, following its regular sixty-day review of the implementation of resolution 687 (1991), that, by cutting off the oil sale talks, Iraq bore "full responsibility" for the humanitarian problems of its people. However, Council Members expressed hope for a resumption of the talks and the early implementation of the scheme set out in its resolution.

The talks are expected to resume soon in Vienna.

* * *

The deployment of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) -- the largest United Nations peace-keeping operation ever staged -- began officially yesterday with the arrival in the capital city of Phnom Penh of the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Cambodia, Yasushi Akashi, head of UNTAC.

In a statement to the press yesterday, Mr. Akashi said the first contingent of the military component of UNTAC had also arrived in the Cambodian capital and others would follow in the coming weeks. Accompanied by a number of senior officials, he said his presence in Phnom Penh marked the beginning of the deployment process.

Mr. Akashi went on to say that the parties to the Cambodian conflict were facing "a historic challenge" in trying to put an end to "two decades of war, destruction and intense suffering" and to create the conditions for a lasting peace and enable the Cambodian people to determine their destiny through free and fair elections. The role of UNTAC was to assist the Cambodian parties to meet this challenge. Mr. Akashi said he expected the parties to comply scrupulously with the Paris Agreements, signed by the four Cambodian parties last October, and to take all necessary measures to ensure the safety and security of all United Nations personnel.

The operation covers seven major areas which are: promotion of human rights, free and fair elections scheduled for spring 1993, military arrangements, civil administration, maintenance of law and order, repatriation of Cambodian refugees and displaced persons, and the rehabilitation of the infrastructure during the transitional period.

On 14 February, the General Assembly decided to appropriate an initial amount of $200 million to cover the start-up costs of UNTAC, pending the discussion and adoption of the overall budget of the Force.

* * *

(more)

The General Assembly's Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) met this morning to take up the Secretary-General's report on financing the United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR) for a period of 12 months, at an estimated gross cost of $620.5 million.

The related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), made public today, recommends that the Assembly appropriate $250 million, inclusive of the $10 million it previously authorized for the Force, and said the amount should be adequate until the Secretary-General submits additional requirements as may be necessary for the period beyond October 1992. At that time a detailed report on the performance of UNPROFOR should also be submitted. In its detailed assessment of the proposed cost estimates of the peace-keeping operation, the Committee also recommended specific cuts to reduce UNPROFOR's proposed costs, particularly in the area of premises, transportation, and services. And it pointed out that further savings could be achieved through voluntary contributions by Member States and other countries and by additional assistance and services by the parties.

In introducing the Secretary-General's report on UNPROFOR today, Under-Secretary-General Dick Thornburgh said that Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali was appealing to Member States to contribute to the UNPROFOR operation. To date, none had been received. He said the success of peace-keeping operations depended largely on Member States.

The representative of Japan, Tadanori Inomata, said that the ACABQ report represented a delicate balance of the views of Member States. In spite of the necessary haste in deploying UNPROFOR, he said, time must be made available to thoroughly examine the funding for such peace-keeping forces in the future.

* * *

The need to address the debt problem of developing countries in the context of the environment and development negotiations was highlighted today, as the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) continued its meetings in New York.

The Minister for Rural Development and Agriculture of Guinea-Bissau, Mario Cabral, said that what had made the Rio Conference important was that for the first time, the problems of environment and development would be dealt with in conjunction. He pointed to two main problems which, he said, would be before the Conference: the need to change today's development model in developing countries to avoid a self-destruction process and to lay the foundation for future generations; and the need for all countries to take part in a joint definition of the rules of a sustainable economic and social development.

He said the ministers in charge of environmental affairs of seven Portuguese-speaking countries -- Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal and Sao Tome and Principe had met to consider suggestions for the drafting of the Earth Charter. Guinea Bissau supported the priorities

(more)

put forward by African countries in the preparatory process which was aimed at finding a dialectic balance between conservation of the environment and the imperatives of development.

* * *

The Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO) reported over the weekend that Turkey had been struck by an earthquake on Friday, 13 March, which had killed 310 people -- a temporary count that could rise to 800.

The Agency said it had immediately made available an emergency grant of $50,000 for humanitarian assistance to people left without shelter. Some 36,000 buildings had been destroyed, it said, and the homeless population numbered about 180,000.

* * *

In Kingston, Jamaica, the Special Commissions on the Law of the Sea have concluded their work for the spring session and approved their programmes for the summer session.

The Special Commission on the mining code, during this session, discussed the mining code's draft accounting principles and procedures, as well as draft labour, health and safety standards. Those topics would be revised and presented to the summer session to be held in New York.

The Special Commission on the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, charged with making all practical arrangements for the establishment of the Tribunal, completed its consideration of the draft protocol on privileges and immunities of the Tribunal. Among matters to be considered at its summer session would be financial and administrative arrangements for the Tribunal, and the relationship agreement between the Tribunal and the United Nations.

The Preparatory Commission for the International Seabed Authority and for the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, completed its consideration of a draft headquarters agreement between the Authority and the Government of Jamaica, as well as a draft protocol on privileges and immunities of the Authority. Consideration of matters relating to the administrative arrangements, structure and financial implications of the International Seabed Authority had been deferred to the summer session.

Two other Commissions -- the Special Commission on the Enterprise, the mining arm of the Seabed Authority, and the Special Commission on land-based Producers also concluded their sessions and plan to meet again in the summer.

* *** *

United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1101
18 March 1992

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

Note: Due to technical difficulties, it was not possible to issue Tuesday Highlights. However, yesterday's top stories are included in today's edition.

* * *

+ Secretary-General welcomes "positive results" of referendum on democratic reform in South Africa.

+ Secretary-General condemns bombing of Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires yesterday, in which large number of innocent victims, including children, were killed or wounded.

+ Security Council expresses unanimous support for Secretary-General's decision to send technical team to Somalia to prepare for cease-fire monitoring; urges team to develop "high priority plan" for unimpeded delivery of humanitarian assistance to Somali civilians.

+ Prince Sihanouk and Secretary-General's Special Representative for Cambodia, Yasushi Akashi, welcome first contingents of United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia, at ceremony in Phnom Penh.

+ Administrative and Budgetary Committee recommends to General Assembly $250 million appropriation for financing of United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia.

+ Secretary-General extends sympathy to families of victims of earthquake in Erzincan, Turkey; says United Nations is ready to assist with relief operations.

+ World Health Organization reports "extremely serious form of malaria" in Cambodia threatening United Nations peace-keepers as well as Cambodian refugees preparing to return home.

(more)

+ Under-Secretary-General for peace-keeping reports on meetings in El Salvador on 14 March, stressing "positive and flexible attitude" of both Government and FMLN.

+ Expert body begins preparations in Geneva for 1994 World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today welcomed "the positive results" of yesterday's referendum on democratic reform in South Africa.

In a statement at Headquarters, the Secretary-General said the results constituted a major step forward towards the eradication of apartheid and the creation of a new non-racial society in South Africa, based on the respect of human rights. Those prospects, he said, would constitute a new factor for peace and development throughout Africa.

* * *

The Secretary-General has condemned the bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires yesterday, in which a large number of innocent victims, including children, were killed or wounded.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali said through his Spokesman that "this outrage demonstrates once again the necessity to fight international terrorism vigorously".

* * *

The Security Council last night expressed unanimous support for the Secretary-General's decision urgently to dispatch a technical team to Somalia to seek agreement on a United Nations "monitoring mechanism" of the cease-fire, signed by the fighting parties on 3 March.

The Council took that action by adopting unanimously resolution 746 (1992) by which it also requested that the team develop a "high priority plan to establish mechanisms to ensure the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian assistance".

The Council also urged all the Somali factions to honour their commitment with the cease-fire and called on all the parties, movements and factions in Mogadiscio, in particular, and in Somalia in general, to respect fully the security and safety of the team and of the personnel of the humanitarian organizations.

By the resolution, the Council further expressed regret that the parties to the Somalia conflict had not abided by their commitment to the cease-fire and that they had not permitted the "unimpeded provision and distribution of humanitarian assistance" to the people in need in Somalia. It expressed deep concern for the "magnitude of the human suffering caused by the conflict" and

(more)

that "the continuation of the situation in Somalia constituted a threat to international peace and security".

The Council also expressed its appreciation to the regional organizations -- the Organization of African Unity (OAU), League of Arab States, and the Organization of the Islamic Conference -- for their cooperation with the United Nations in the effort to resolve the Somali problem.

In related news, the Spokesman said that, following yesterday's resolution, a technical team of 15 people was being set up with representatives of four areas: political, peace-keeping, humanitarian and regional organizations. He said that due to the urgency of the situation, the team was expected to regroup in Nairobi over the weekend to work on its plan for the mission.

* * *

The first contingents of the United Nations Transitional Authority (UNTAC) have arrived in Phnom Penh together with the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Cambodia, Yasushi Akashi, marking the beginning of the United Nations peace plan to end the 13-year conflict and to prepare for free elections.

At a ceremony outside the Royal Palace on Monday 16 March, the Indonesian, Australian, French and Thai contingents were welcomed by Prince Norodom Sihanouk and Mr. Akashi, head of UNTAC.

It was announced at a meeting of the Supreme National Council (SNC) -- the governing authority in Cambodia established under the Paris Agreement last October -- that a headquarters had been made available for UNTAC in Phnom Penh. Issues discussed during that meeting included, among other things, the mechanism set up under the Agreement, by which the Supreme National Council delegates to the United Nations all necessary powers to ensure the implementation of the plan. Also discussed were the timing and the modalities of the repatriation of the refugees; the regrouping and disposition of demobilized Cambodian forces; landmines; and the enforcement of law and order.

In a related development, it was announced today at Headquarters that Japan has deposited some $25 million -- its assessed contribution to UNTAC -- to assist the operation in meeting its start-up cost of $200 million.

In other news, the World Food Programme (WFP) has announced that it will provide emergency food aid worth of $330,000 to Cambodian refugees in Viet Nam. The Agency said the food aid would cover the needs of 12,650 refugees in the Lonbgbe Province for a 12-month period. The refugees fled Cambodia between 1976 and 1979 due to civil conflict and some 100,000 persons took refuge in south Viet Nam. Most of them have since returned home.

* * *

(more)

The General Assembly's Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) this morning approved without a vote a draft resolution which would have the Assembly appropriate $250 million for the expenses of the United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR).

The Assembly would appropriate that amount, inclusive of $10 million previously authorized in accordance with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Question (ACABQ). The Advisory Committee was of the view that the $250 million should be adequate until the Secretary-General submits additional requirement as may be necessary for the period beyond 1992.

The draft resolution would further have the Secretary-General report to the Assembly, by the start of its 47th session, on any additional requirement, and include detail and up-to-date information on the performance of UNPROFOR.

The General Assembly will meet tomorrow morning to act on the recommendation of the Fifth Committee.

* * *

The Secretary-General yesterday expressed his "great concern" over the widespread destruction and intense human sufferings caused by the earthquake that struck the Turkish City of Erzincan on Friday, 13 March.

In a message sent to the President of Turkey, Turgut Ozal, the Secretary-General extended the assistance of the United Nations for the relief operations in that country, in the form of relief specialists and air-lifting relief supplies. He informed the Turkish Government that he had requested the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator to continue his efforts to mobilize assistance, both financial and material, needed by the Turkish Government from external sources.

* * *

The World Health Organization (WHO) has reported that an extremely serious form of malaria, resistant to the usual drugs employed against the disease, is emerging in Cambodia, threatening more than 16,000 soldiers of the United Nations peace-keeping force now entering the country. Some 360,000 Cambodian refugees preparing to return to their homes in the next few weeks will also be at risk.

According to WHO experts, supplies of drugs in Cambodia are only a quarter of what is needed. Quinine plus tetracycline -- the main emergency treatment -- as well as other drugs, are all in short supply. Furthermore, resistance appears to be developing to most treatments, even to mefloquine.

The members of the peace-keeping force - United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) -- will be instructed to use insect repellants, wear long-sleeve clothes and sleep under bed-nets impregnated with insecticides. When in malaria's area for prolonged periods, the soldiers will

(more)

take regular doxycycline, an antibiotic, which has so far not been used in the area and for which no hard evidence of resistance has been found.

* * *

Describing the attitude during recent meetings in El Salvador as "positive and flexible", the head of United Nations peace-keeping operations says he is "confident" that the agreements reached with representatives of the Government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) will be "implemented forthwith".

Under-Secretary-General Marrack Goulding was reporting on his recent mission in El Salvador, at the request of the Secretary-General, to discuss how best to set in motion the implementation of the Peace Agreement reached in New York on 31 December 1991 and solve certain problems which have occurred in that connection.

In a statement following the meetings, Mr. Goulding said he had obtained assurances from the FMLN that its concentration within its 15 zones would be completed according to the itinerary communicated to the United Nations Observer Force in El Salvador (ONUSAL), on the understanding that ONUSAL will promptly finalize arrangements with the Government for completing the concentration of its own forces at the earliest possible opportunity.

The Government has also provided assurances that the arrangements designed to facilitate logistic support in the 15 zones occupied by FMLN personnel, with ONUSAL as coordinator, will be set in motion.

On the question of land, Mr. Goulding said he had proposed various measures to diminish the tension between both sides and to create a climate of understanding between them with the good offices of ONUSAL. Among those, he said, was a proposal for the FMLN to do everything possible to prevent the taking of additional land and for the Government to prevent further instances of dispossession.

* * *

Preparations have begun in Geneva for the 1994 World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, endorsed by the General Assembly.

During its four-day session, the Scientific and Technical Committee -- a 24-member expert body charged with developing overall programmes for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (1990s) -- will assess progress in national and international programmes and projects designed to mitigate the effects of natural disasters, and discuss further plans for strengthening national capacities for disaster preparedness and reduction.

The Committee will also discuss, during its third session, input into regional meetings on disasters in Addis Ababa, in April, and in Jamaica, in

(more)

May, as well as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio Janeiro, to be held in June, stressing the link between the environment and natural disasters.

The main target of International Decade is that, by the year 2000, all countries, as part of their plan to achieve sustainable development, should have in place a national assessment of risk, national and/or local prevention and preparedness plan, and global, regional, national and local warning system.

* *** *

United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1102
19 March 1992

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General holds first press conference at Headquarters after 79 days in office, emphasizing cooperation between United Nations and regional organizations and relationship between peace and development; announces creation of task force to prepare position paper on peace-keeping, peace-making and preventive diplomacy.

+ In Presidential statement, the Security Council tonight welcomes decision by Iraqi authorities to resume discussions on the sale of Iraqi oil to meet the essential humanitarian needs of its civilian population, in conformity with resolutions 706 and 712 (1991).

+ General Assembly approves appropriation of $250 million for initial expenses of United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia.

+ Anti-Apartheid Committee Chairman says South African referendum "must be the last one to be conducted by segment of population on destiny of entire nation"; General Assembly President calls results of referendum "positive and encouraging"; Committee to observe International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, tomorrow, 20 March.

+ Secretary-General meets with Permanent Representatives to the United Nations of Venezuela, Colombia, Mexico and Spain -- "Friends of the Secretary-General" -- for briefing on El Salvador.

+ United Nations is owed over $1.2 billion by Member States to regular budget and over $638 million for peace-keeping operations, according to new report on status of contributions as of 29 February 1992.

+ International Earth Day to be observed at Headquarters tomorrow, 20 March.

+ United Nations offers immediate relief aid to earthquake victims in Turkey.

* * *

(more)

For information media—not an official record

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali disclosed today during his first press conference after 79 days in office that a task force was being created, under the presidency of Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Vladimir Petrovsky, in conformity with the decision adopted by the Security Council's summit meeting held in New York on 31 January 1992. The purpose of the task force, he said, was to prepare and submit by the end of May a position paper related to the issues of peace-keeping, peace-making and preventive diplomacy to the Security Council.

Reviewing his first two-and-a-half months as United Nations Secretary-General, Mr Boutros-Ghali emphasized the Organization's peace-keeping activities in countries and regions such as Yugoslavia, Cambodia, El Salvador, Somalia, Myanmar, Angola, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Western Sahara, among others.

He underlined the importance attached to increased cooperation between the United Nations and different regional organizations in the area of peace-keeping, peace-making and preventive diplomacy. In Yugoslavia, he said, "there is a very clear division of labour between the European Community, dealing with national reconciliation and the building of the peace process. He said the role of the United Nations related in that respect related only to peace-keeping to maintain the cease-fire. In Somalia, he explained, the Organization was cooperating with three regional organizations -- the Arab League, the Islamic Conference and the Organization of African Unity -- in the implementation of the peace process in that country. Finally, he said, in the conflict in Armenia and Azerbaijan, the United Nations was encouraging the Europeans to play a role. "We are hoping that through this cooperation, we may promote preventive diplomacy and we may even promote a kind of decentralization in the different operations of peace-keeping", the Secretary-General stressed.

Addressing the Palestinian issue, the Secretary-General emphasized that the United Nations "continued to do whatever ought to be done" to help the Palestinians in the occupied territories through its different organizations. As to the international conference on the Middle East, he reiterated that if the United Nations "will be invited to participate as a full-fledged member, we will welcome this, but we will not accept to participate in the conference as an observer". The presence of the United Nations was essential to maintain peace and to promote a peace process in the region, he said.

Speaking about the role that the Organization could play in the creation of a "new world order", Mr. Boutros-Ghali said that the United Nations could be "a framework for discussion, for reflection". The final decision, he said, would have to be taken by the Member States. "But I believe that there will be no new world order, unless there is more democratization of the international relations, meaning a better participation of the 175 Members of the United Nations in the different problems discussed in the United Nations", he said.

The Secretary-General concluded by stressing the close relationship between peace and development. "If we want to achieve real peace, a lasting

peace, it is very important to maintain the relation between peace-keeping operations and the peace-building operations -- meaning economic and social development, economic and technical assistance", he concluded.

* * *

The Security Council has welcomed the decision of Iraqi authorities to resume discussions with the United Nations on the implementation of a scheme provided for in resolutions 706 and 712 (1991), permitting Iraq to sell $1.6 billion worth of petroleum and petroleum products to meet the essential humanitarian needs of the civilian population.

In a statement read by the President of the Council, Diego Arria (Venezuela) during a formal meeting tonight, the Council welcomed the Secretary-General's intention to organize the discussions without delay. The Council said it was prepared to authorize the sales regime as stated in its resolutions for a period of six months, "as soon as the Secretary-General indicates that Iraqi authorities are prepared to proceed". The Council also said it was prepared to consider possible further extensions of time based on Iraq's cooperation with the resolutions.

Earlier this week, a United Nations spokesman announced the appointment of Assistant Secretary-General Giandomenico Picco as head of the United Nations delegation participating in the talks on the sale of Iraqi oil. The talks are expected to resume shortly in Vienna, but no date has yet been announced.

* * *

The General Assembly this morning approved the appropriation of $250 million for the initial expenses of the United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR), as recommended by the Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary).

By the resolution, adopted without a vote, the Assembly accepted the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) that the $250 million should be adequate until the Secretary-General submits a report on additional requirements as may be necessary for the period beyond 1992. The report will be due at the start of the next General Assembly.

Speaking after the Assembly action, the representative of Yugoslavia, Darko Silovic, pledged that his country would offset the operation's cost to the extend possible. He also called on all parties to work for a comprehensive and lasting solution to the conflict through the Conference on Yugoslavia.

* * *

The Chairman of the Special Committee Against Apartheid interpreted yesterday the result of the South African referendum for whites only as "an

unequivocal expression of support for the continuation of the current process of negotiations".

In a comment on Tuesday's referendum, Ibrahim A. Gambari said the Special Committee was most concerned about the referendum's lack of universal pluralism, since it included only about 15 per cent of the total population of South Africa. It was the firm hope of the Committee, he said, that this would be the last referendum to be conducted by a segment of the South African population on the destiny of the entire nation.

In a related development, the President of the General Assembly, Samir S. Shihabi (Saudi Arabia) said today in a statement that he was pleased to learn that the results of the referendum in South Africa were "positive and encouraging". He expressed hope that the results would augur well for the future of all the people of South Africa and would lead to the full and complete elimination of apartheid and the early establishment of a truly non-racial society in South Africa.

In other news, the Special Committee will hold a solemn meeting in observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination tomorrow, 20 March, at Headquarters. The meeting will be followed by a round-table discussion attended by individuals and representatives of South African liberation movements and non-governmental organizations, among others.

The annual observance marks the thirty-second anniversary of the massacre at Sharpeville, South Africa, of 69 persons demonstrating peacefully against apartheid laws, which required Africans to carry identification books at all times.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali met yesterday with the Permanent Representatives of Colombia, Mexico, Spain and Venezuela to the United Nations, to discuss the situation in El Salvador.

The Secretary-General's Spokesman said today that Mr. Boutros-Ghali had briefed the four countries' representatives on the mission to El Salvador of Under-Secretary-General Marrack Goulding last week. Among the issues discussed was the forthcoming consultative meeting at the World Bank at which reconstruction efforts for El Salvador would be taken up. The countries assured the Secretary-General of their own continued support in those efforts.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali informed them that United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) would be participating, and he expressed the hope that the international community would be well represented and lend its full backing to the task of national reconciliation.

* * *

(more)

According to a new report on the status of contributions to the United Nations regular budget as of 29 February 1992, Member States owe the Organization over $1.2 billion for this year and all previous years.

According to the report, the peace-keeping operations are currently owed some $638 million by Member States.

* * *

Immediate relief aid to the victims of the 13 March earthquake in eastern Turkey has been coordinated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO).

According to estimates, 800 to 1000 persons have died, a similar number are injured and 180,000 have been left homeless by the quake which devastated the city of Erzincan, causing additional damage. The priority is now to find shelter for the homeless in Erzincan and the surrounding villages.

* * *

The International Earth Day will be observed at United Nations Headquarters tomorrow, 20 March, for the twenty-third time. Since 1969, the Peace Bell, forged out of coins collected by children from 60 countries and donated to the United Nations by Japan, has been the focal point of the annual United Nations ceremony commemorating the Day.

This year's celebration comes in advance of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in Rio de Janeiro in June.

At Headquarters, a ceremony will be held at the Peace Bell at 3:48 a.m. (EST), the moment of the Vernal Equinox, marking the first day of spring in the Northern Hemisphere and autumn in the Southern Hemisphere. Former hostage Joseph Cicippio will participate in this ceremony together with his wife, Elhan, and his brother Thomas.

Participating in a second Peace Bell Ceremony at 3:30 p.m. will be representatives of Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali and Director-General of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Federico Mayor. Also present will be the United Nations Ambassadors of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

* *** *

United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1103
20 March 1992

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Iraq discloses new information about its weapons programmes; the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament calls disclosure "good news".

+ United Nations technical team, headed by Robert Gallagher of Canada, to travel to Mogadiscio on Monday, 23 March, to address questions of cease-fire monitoring and humanitarian assistance.

+ Secretary-General addresses solemn meeting of Anti-apartheid Committee on occasion of International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination; General Assembly President says racism and racial discrimination are serious rights violations which must be combated in South Africa and in occupied territories.

+ Inter-Agency Humanitarian Programme for Iraq, Kuwait and Iraqi border areas reports shortfall of $62 million in funding; says security situation in northern Iraq "continues to deteriorate".

* * *

The Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament announced today that it had received a letter from the Iraqi authorities indicating their intention to undertake the destruction of the items associated with Iraq's ballistic missiles programmes.

In a press release issued at Headquarters, the Commission disclosed it had also received important new information concerning Iraq's ballistic missiles and chemical weapons capabilities. Furthermore, Iraq states its willingness to make the full, final and complete disclosure of its programmes that the Commission had being seeking all along. The information was being assessed by the Commission.

The Commission received the letter yesterday at a meeting between the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission, Rolf Ekeus, and the Permanent

(more)

For information media—not an official record

Representative of Iraq, Abdul al-Amir Al-Anbari, following a series of meetings between the Iraqi delegation and officials from the Special Commission last week.

At a press conference at Headquarters today, Mr. Ekeus called the information from Iraq "good news", saying "it confirms our concerns, but it also demonstrates a new attitude from Iraq."

* * *

A United Nations spokesman announced today that the 15-member technical team bound for Somalia would be headed by Robert Gallagher of Canada and would go to Mogadiscio on Monday, 23 March, after regrouping in Nairobi over the weekend.

The Secretary-General had proposed to send such a team to Somalia to prepare for a United Nations "monitoring mechanism" of the cease-fire agreement of 3 March, and to seek agreement on "unimpeded delivery" of humanitarian assistance. The Secretary-General's plan was endorsed by the Security Council on Tuesday.

According to the spokesman, the team would also visit the Somali cities of Berbera and Kismaya, where it would address the question of provision of humanitarian assistance. On 2 April, the team would return to Nairobi to finalize its report, before flying back to Headquarters on 5 April.

The team consists of three people contributed by Governments (including the team leader); political, peace-keeping and humanitarian staff from the United Nations; one representative each from the Organization of African Unity (OAU), League of Arab States and Organization of the Islamic Conference, and a representative from a non-governmental organization.

* * *

The results of the recent referendum in South Africa had clearly demonstrated that the overwhelming majority of white South Africans support the negotiating process for a non-racial democracy, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said today in a statement on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

At a solemn meeting held by the Special Committee Against Apartheid, he said that the outcome underlined the commitment of the South African people to reform and change through peaceful means and provided a fresh and compelling impetus to the negotiations now taking place within the framework of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa.

The United Nations, which participated in that Convention in its first meeting in December as an observer, was fully committed to the negotiating process, the Secretary-General said.

(more)

In his statement today, the President of the General Assembly, Samir S. Shihabi (Saudi Arabia), reaffirmed that all forms of racism and racial discrimination, particularly in their institutionalized form, such as apartheid, or resulting from official doctrines or racial superiority, were among the most serious violations of human rights in the contemporary world. They must therefore be combated, especially in South Africa and in the occupied territories and territories under alien domination, he said.

* * *

The United Nations Inter-Agency Programme for Iraq, Kuwait and Iraq's border areas with Iran and Turkey has reported a shortfall in funding to its programmes of approximately $62 million, as of 17 March.

According to a new situation report issued today, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in Geneva says the Programme's financial status is in a "critical phase with imminent danger of reduction and even termination of some activities if contributions are not forthcoming". It reports that several Agencies require that the pledges already made be provided as soon as possible and that new pledges be made towards the budgetary shortfall.

The security situation continues to deteriorate, according to the report, with heavy artillery and helicopters introduced in the ongoing fighting in Suleimaniya and Erbil Governorates in northern Iraq. Clashes involving casualties have occurred and a bomb explosion killing three people and injuring 25 was reported in the city of Erbil on 16 March, the report says.

* *** *

United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1104
23 March 1992

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General says additional cost for his proposal to establish Electoral Division of United Nations Angola Verification Mission will be approximately $18.8 million.

+ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to begin repatriation of 375,000 Cambodian refugees on Monday, 30 March.

+ United Nations inspection team visits buried, apparently destroyed ballistic missiles in Iraq; Iraqi authorities hand over plans for destruction of missile equipment that they have previously failed to deliver.

+ Commission on Status of Women decides to hold 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing, as it concludes annual session in Vienna.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali says the expanded responsibilities of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM II) -- if approved by the Security Council -- will cost the Organization approximately $18.8 million. He proposes that the amount be considered an expense to the United Nations to be borne by Member States.

The Secretary-General had proposed in a report to the Security Council that the UNAVEM be enlarged to include an Electoral Division for the purpose of observing and verifying the Angolan electoral process scheduled for September 1992. The expanded mandate would cover the period from 15 March to 31 October 1992.

In a further report to the Council, dated 20 March, the Secretary-General said that in order to carry out the expanded responsibilities it would be necessary to establish an office of the Special Representative in Luanda and to add an Electoral Division with six regional offices. Margaret Anstee, former Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna, is the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Angola. (S/23671/Add.1)

* * *

(more)

For information media--not an official record

Calling it an "essential step in the implementation of the United Nations settlement plan for Cambodia", Spokesman François Giuliani announced today that the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) would begin repatriation of 375,000 Cambodians in Thailand on Monday, 30 March.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Transition Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), Yasushi Akashi, will be in charge of the repatriation process.

The Spokesman said the date for the repatriation was agreed in Phnom Penh after consultations between Prince Norodom Sihanouk, President of the Supreme National Council, and Mr. Akashi. Preparations were now under way on both sides of the border for the 30 March movement, he said. In Thailand, 70 families (600 people) from various border camps would be contacted by UNHCR during the week.

* * *

An inspection team of the Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament visited today two sites at which Iraq claims to have buried SCUD-type missiles that were destroyed last summer. The team reported that initial excavation revealed some pieces of such missiles.

In a press release at Headquarters today, the Special Commission said the Iraqi authorities had been asked to conduct a full excavation to enable verification to be undertaken. When preparations are complete, the team will resume verification activities at the sites.

Iraqi authorities have also handed over plans for destruction of equipment associated with ballistic missiles programmes, that they had failed to deliver to the previous inspection team. Those plans were being studied and, if they meet requirements of Special Commission, destruction would begin during the team's inspection, the Commission said.

* * *

The Commission on the Status of Women decided on Friday, 20 March, that the Fourth World Conference on Women be held in Beijing from 4 to 15 September 1995.

The Commission, which is the preparatory body for that Conference, took that action by adopting a resolution which would have the United Nations Secretary-General appoint, by the end of 1992, a woman as Secretary-General of the Conference. The Commission recommended that she have international stature in relation to the advancement of women and experience of the United Nations system, and that she assume primary responsibility for the preparation of the Conference.

In her closing statement on Friday, Mrevat Tallawy (Egypt), Chairman of the Commission, said the current session had set a firm basis for the next stage of preparations for the 1995 Conference. She called on the

Secretary-General to ensure that the secretariat of the Conference would be equipped to carry forward the tasks for its successful completion.

* * *

Among other decisions, the Commission recommended that the existence and scope of the communications mechanism on the status of women be publicized widely. It also recommended that existing procedure for receiving and considering communications, including the standard of admissibility, be made more transparent and efficient.

* *** *

United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1105
24 March 1992

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council votes unanimously to enlarge mandate of United Nations Verification Mission in Angola to include electoral division for September elections; urges Angolan parties to agree on fixed date for elections as soon as possible.

+ Secretary-General is informed of Libyan willingness to hand over two persons accused of involvement in destruction of Pan Am flight 103 to League of Arab States; asks Libya for written confirmation that handover will be "a first step" in full compliance with resolution 731 (1992).

+ United Nations Protection Force Commander in Yugoslavia appeals to Yugoslav authorities to end cease-fire violations, after second incident in areas where United Nations personnel are located.

+ Secretary-General appoints Sahabzada Yaqub-Khan of Pakistan as his Special Representative for Western Sahara. He replaces Johannes J. Manz of Switzerland.

+ Secretary-General appeals for voluntary contributions for financing of United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus which is in shortfall of $196 million.

+ Executive Board of United Nations Children's Fund begins organizational session in New York.

* * *

The Security Council today voted unanimously to enlarge the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Angola (UNAVEM II) to include an electoral division to assist the country in the holding of free and fair elections in September 1992, as recommended by the Secretary-General in his report of 3 March. The Council urged the Angolan parties to establish a precise timetable as soon as possible, so that elections can take place at a fixed date.

(more)

For information media – not an official record

The Council took that action by adopting a resolution, in which it underlined the necessity for the United Nations electoral Mission to have the explicit agreement of the two parties to the Peace Accords signed last May -- the Angolan Government and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA).

Members of the Council urged the Angolan parties to comply scrupulously with the provisions of the Peace Accords, including demobilization of their troops without delay; formation of a unified national armed force; effective operation of joint police monitoring units; and extension of the central administration, among other things. They called on the Angolan authorities and parties to finalize political, legal, organizational and budgetary preparations for free and fair multi-parti elections in September and to make resources available for the electoral process.

The Secretary-General urged in his report on the question that the timetable for the implementation of the Peace Accords "not be delayed further" and that all Angolan parties join together in making renewed commitments to the realization of the elections. The "new role" for the United Nations in Angola would be "a daunting challenge", he said, given the devastated condition of the country with regard to lack of infrastructure as well as administrative and political instability.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali met yesterday with the Libyan Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ali Ahmed Elhouderi, to discuss the situation concerning the two Libyans accused of involvement in the downing of Pan Am flight 103 over Scotland in 1988.

A United Nations spokesman told correspondents today that the Libyan Ambassador had informed the Secretary-General of his country's willingness to hand over the two accused to the League of Arab States. The Secretary-General asked the Ambassador for "confirmation in writing" that the handover would be a "first step" in complying fully and unconditionally with Security Council resolution 731 (1992). Mr. Boutros-Ghali also told the Ambassador that the United Nations would be prepared to cooperate with the League towards that end. If the League and the Libyan Government so wished, he said, the handover could be done in the presence of a United Nations representative.

The Security Council urged in January the Libyan Government immediately to provide a full and effective response to the requests for cooperation in establishing responsibility for the terrorist acts against Pan Am flight 103 and UTA flight 772. It also called on all States to "assist in the apprehension and prosecution of those responsible for this criminal act".

* * *

The Force Commander of United Nations Protection force in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR), Lieutenant General Satish Nambiar, has issued an urgent appeal to the authorities in Belgrade and Zagreb to take all necessary measures to end

(more)

the cease-fire violations which, he says, have intensified in frequency and seriousness in some areas in recent days.

The Force Commander said today in a statement through a spokesman for UNPROFOR that the continuing cease-fire violations "needlessly prolonged" the suffering of the civilian population and could delay the full deployment of the Force.

The spokesman reported that artillery fire had struck near a hotel in the town of Beli Manastir, in Eastern Slavonia, where a number of Belgian members of the Protection force were staying. No one was injured. The source of the shelling could not be determined by United Nations personnel on the scene, the Spokesman said. The incident followed a similar one in the same area the previous day, when artillery rounds landed close to members of the Russian contingent.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has appointed Mr. Sahabzada Yaqub-Khan of Pakistan as his Special Representative for Western Sahara. He will replace Mr. Johannes J. Manz of Switzerland.

Among Mr. Yaqub-Khan's diplomatic assignments, he served as his country's Ambassador to France, Ireland, the United States, Jamaica and Moscow. He was Pakistan's Foreign Minister from 1982 to 1987, and then from 1988 to 1991.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has appealed to Governments of all United Nations Member States for voluntary contributions for the financing of the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) to cover the Force's deficit of $196 million, as of mid-February 1992.

In a letter to all Member States, dated 10 March, the Secretary-General said that, even though the United Nations share is less than a third of the total cost of UNFICYP, receipts continued to fall short of the Organization's share of expenditure. The Secretary-General described it as "most unfair" that the troop-contributing countries should have to absorb "such a disproportionate share" of the cost of UNFICYP.

According to the Secretary-General, only $2.4 million had so far been received for the current mandate period, which ends on 15 June, against projected expenditure estimated at some $15.4 million. The United Nations had only been able to meet the claims of troop-contributing countries up to mid-June 1981 -- a "highly unsatisfactory situation" which must not be allowed to continue, the Secretary-General said.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali stated further that the vital peace-keeping role of the Force had been unanimously stressed by the Security Council time and again since its establishment in 1964. UNFICYP continued to make an "indispensable contribution" to maintaining calm on the island -- a condition which was

(more)

clearly necessary for his ongoing efforts to negotiate a political settlement, the Secretary-General said.

* * *

The role to be played by the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in guiding the agency into a radically changed world order will be the key issue before the Board, under one of several proposals to be taken up at a two-day organizational session that began at Headquarters today. At the session, the Board is to consider the agenda for its regular session to be held from 15 to 26 June.

Mira Seth (India), Chairman of the UNICEF Executive Board, in her opening statement, drew attention to the problem caused by the rising price of vaccines, noting that the subject would be discussed during the Board's June session. Today's world was full of opportunities and dangers, she continued, and it was a challenge for UNICEF to play its crucial role of keeping the focus of the world on the betterment of the lives of children and women.

Among other questions recommended for inclusion on the Board's agenda are: UNICEF's increasing response to emergency situations, the agency's intervention as a mediator for children in armed conflicts, a broader concept of women's health concerns, and UNICEF's recent efforts to assess needs for assistance to women and children in Eastern Europe.

* *** *

United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1106
25 March 1992

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) calls on Iraq to begin destruction of facilities at Al Atheer; Iraq claims site is being used for civilian purposes.

+ IAEA says no significant levels of radiation exposure or contamination occurred at yesterday's incident at Leningradskaya Nuclear Power Plant.

+ United Nations Protection Force Commander in Yugoslavia moves into his headquarters in Sarajevo; hears reports from Sector Commanders following their week-long reconnaissance missions in protected areas.

+ Committee on Information to begin session at Headquarters to review United Nations public information policies.

+ High-level meeting on African common position for environment/development conference to be held at Headquarters on 29 and 30 March.

* * *

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said today that despite "lengthy and detailed explanations" given by the Iraqi technical team on the civil nature and functions of the Al Atheer Centre, the Agency remained convinced that the technical core of this facility was designated for special processes needed for nuclear weapons development and manufacturing, including uranium metallurgy.

The IAEA has therefore informed Iraq of its decision to proceed with the destruction of the relevant facilities and equipment at the site, in accordance with Security Council resolution 687 (1991). The destruction will begin by mid-April.

The statement follows meetings from 20 to 24 March between the IAEA and an Iraqi technical delegations, requested by Iraq to clarify the role and functions of Al Atheer and its nuclear-weapons-related capabilities.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

The IAEA said it reached the conclusion that certain buildings at Al Atheer had been designed to accommodate activities related to nuclear weapons activities after completion of its inspections and detailed analysis of documents taken from Iraq - and confirmed during the meetings.

In related news, the ninth ballistic missiles inspection team today witnessed the start of the destruction of Iraq's ballistic missiles production and repair facilities.

* * *

According to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), no significant levels of radiation exposure or contamination have occurred at yesterday's incident at Leningradskaya Unit 3 Nuclear Power Plant in the Russian Federation.

The Agency said in a press release issued at Headquarters that the incident had been rated at level 2 on the INES scale by the Russian Ministry of Atomic Energy. This would indicate that there are no releases of radioactive materials to the environment above the normal authorized rates. However, IAEA said, there was an indication of a somewhat higher than authorized release of iodine gas from the stack.

The IAEA has previously announced that it will undertake a detailed study of the safety of the light-water graphite moderated (RBMK) reactors as the one in Leningradskaya. An initial meeting is scheduled for 6 to 10 April in Vienna.

* * *

The Commander of the United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR) today moved into his headquarters in Sarajevo and participated in a flag-rising ceremony. The building, a former postal and communications facility that was made available by the authorities, can provide office space for up to 500 UNPROFOR personnel.

Force Commander Satish Nambiar today also received reports from his four Sector Commanders following their week-long reconnaissance missions in the designated United Nations Protection Areas.

UNPROFOR support units from Canada, Sweden and Norway continue to arrive in the area of operations. The strength of the UNPROFOR Civilian Police (CIVPOL) currently stands at 126.

* * *

On Monday, 30 March, the Committee on Information will begin a new 18-day session during which it will continue its examination of United Nations public information policies and activities, as well as its ongoing efforts to promote establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order.

(more)

With regard to the public information area, the Committee will focus on the activities of the Organization's 61 information centres, implementation of a system-wide information programme for the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and activities of the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC). The Committee will have before it reports by the Secretary-General.

* * *

A high-level meeting on the African common position for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in June will take place on 29 and 30 March at Headquarters.

Sponsored by the Department of Economic and Social Development (DESD) and the Global Coalition for Africa, a Washington-based organization, the purpose of the meeting is to discuss the main objectives and basic elements of Africa's common position for the conference, with partners from the industrialized countries.

Among the participants are high-level Government officials from the Netherlands, Côte d'Ivoire, France, Botswana, Kenya and Norway, as well as the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Development and the Secretary-General of UNCED.

* *** *